The Identification of PFC Charles Theodore Plog at the Nibelungen Bridge

(Formerly the Ernst Ludwig Bridge)

By Karen Lagrange Cox

Historical Record Preservation Copy

Version 1.0
March 19, 2026

"At long last, the soldier lying on the Nibelungen Bridge over the Rhine in Worms, Germany, from March 1945, has been identified. I can finally call him by name, PFC Charles Theodore Plog, while honoring his service."

— Karen Lagrange Cox
Independent Researcher, Broussard, Louisiana, United States

Prepared for historical preservation, scholarly reference, and archival continuity.

ARCHIVAL PREFACE

Preservation Purpose

This Historical Record Preservation Copy has been prepared by **Karen Lagrange Cox, Independent Researcher, Broussard, Louisiana, United States**, to preserve the historical research, documentary analysis, and identification findings concerning **Private First-Class Charles Theodore Plog of Poughkeepsie, New York**, whose identity in a wartime photograph remained unknown for decades.

The purpose of this historical record preservation copy is to ensure the continued availability of this historical research for scholars, historians, educators, genealogists, military researchers, and future historical inquiry, regardless of the continued existence of digital publication platforms or the author's future ability to personally maintain stewardship.

This document has been compiled solely for **historical preservation, educational reference, scholarly research, genealogical inquiry, and noncommercial documentary use.**

Research Contributors and Historical Attribution

This historical research preservation copy was authored and compiled by **Karen Lagrange Cox** and reflects collaborative research, documentary review, military records analysis, contextual interpretation, archival comparison, and supporting historical contributions from:

- **Joey van Meesen**, historian, **Footsteps® Researchers** and **SNAFU DOCS** - Schiedam, The Netherlands
- **Karen Lagrange Cox**, Independent Researcher - Broussard, Louisiana, United States
- **Carlo Riva**, City Council Member, City of Worms, Germany; former longtime employee with the United States Army in Germany
- **William Borneman**, United States; retired Captain, Military Police

The identification of **PFC Charles Theodore Plog** in the wartime Associated Press photograph was made by **historian Joey van Meesen of Footsteps® Researchers and SNAFU DOCS**, through photographic historical identification analysis.

Historical Context and Subjects

This historical record preservation copy concerns historical events surrounding the March 1945 combat actions at the **Ernst Ludwig Bridge in Worms, Germany**, later known as the **Nibelungen Bridge**.

The Associated Press wartime photograph central to this research depicts the fallen serviceman now identified as **PFC Charles Theodore Plog of Poughkeepsie, New York**, along with:

PFC Billy Leon Zimmerman

- Hagerstown, Maryland
- 838th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion (B Battalion)

PFC Norman Franklin Booher

- Trinidad, Colorado
- 838th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion (B Battalion)

This historical record preservation copy documents the historical research that led to the identification of PFC Plog and preserves the contextual record associated with that finding.

Image Documentation and Rights Notice

This document includes historically relevant visual materials used for purposes of identification analysis, historical interpretation, documentary commentary, scholarship, and preservation.

Referenced and reproduced visual materials include:

Associated Press Historical Photograph (Referenced Only)

- AP Photo ID: **5450301058**
- Photographer: **James Pringle, Associated Press**
- Historical wartime image associated with the March 1945 events at the Ernst Ludwig Bridge in Worms, Germany
- This image is discussed and historically referenced in this historical record preservation copy but is **not reproduced herein**.

U.S. Army Signal Corps Historical Photograph (Reproduced in Historical Record Preservation Copy)

Preserved in the U.S. National Archives Catalog:

- **National Archives Identifier (NAID): 636328704**
- **Local Identifier: 111-SC-203201**
- Reproduced in this historical record preservation copy for historical documentation, research, and archival reference.

Additional historical images included in this historical record preservation copy are attributed within the document in order of appearance.

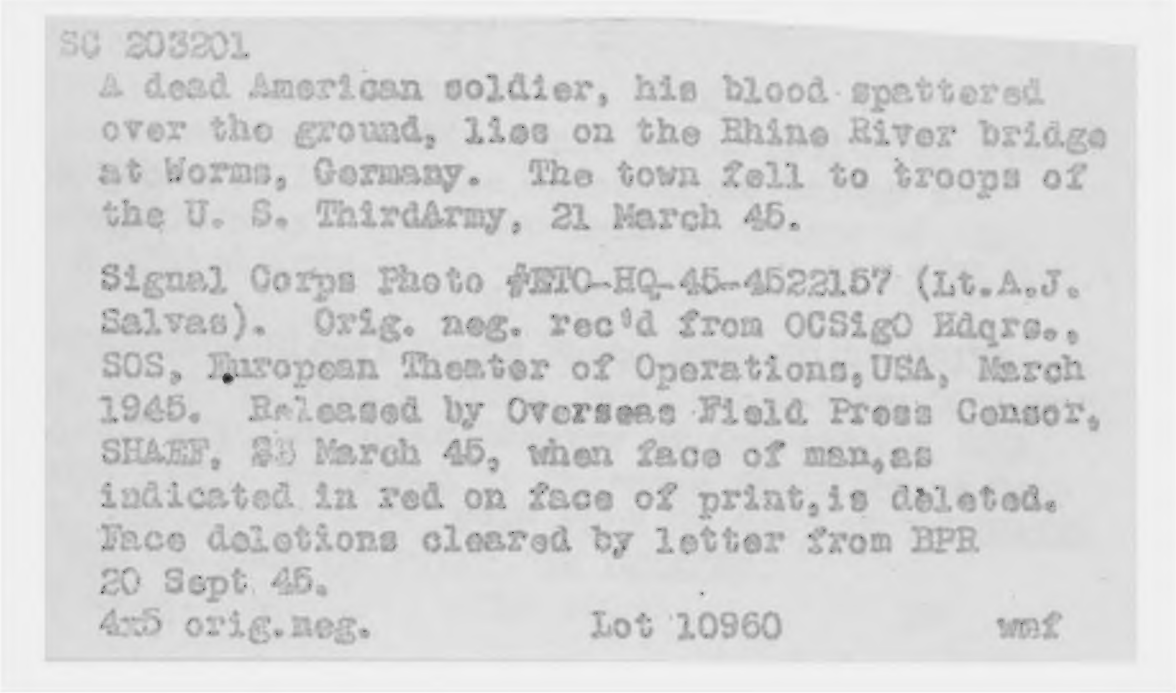
No claim of ownership is made over third-party images, archival records, or independently owned historical materials.

WWII Soldier Seen in Nibelungen Bridge Photographs Identified After Eight Decades

Sensitive Content: *Historical Notice - The following photographs show a U.S. soldier from World War II who lost his life in combat. Viewer discretion is advised. This section aims to honor the soldier, identify him within the photographs, and document history for educational and commemorative purposes. The photographs are presented for historical documentation and remembrance, with the intent of honoring service rather than depicting loss.*

Photo: U.S. Army Signal Corps photograph taken by Lieutenant A. J. Salvas, showing fallen American serviceman, now identified as Private First-Class Charles Theodore Plog of Poughkeepsie, New York, on the Ernst Ludwig Bridge (later known as the Nibelungen Bridge) in Worms, Germany, March 21, 1945. Preserved in the United States National Archives Catalog (National Archives Identifier 636328704; Local Identifier 111-SC-203201).

Included in this historical record preservation copy for historical documentation, research, educational reference, and archival preservation.


SC 203201
A dead American soldier, his blood spattered over the ground, lies on the Rhine River bridge at Worms, Germany. The town fell to troops of the U. S. ThirdArmy, 21 March 45.

Signal Corps Photo #ETO-HQ-45-4522157 (Lt.A.J. Salvas). Orig. neg. rec'd from OCSigO Hdqrs., SOS, European Theater of Operations, USA, March 1945. Released by Overseas Field Press Censor, SHAEF, 23 March 45, when face of man, as indicated in red on face of print, is deleted. Face deletions cleared by letter from BPR 20 Sept 45.
4x5 orig.neg. Lot 10960 wmf

Archival Metadata for U.S. Army Signal Corps Photo 111-SC-203201

This image contains archival documentation pertaining to ***U.S. Army Signal Corps photo 111-SC-203201****, preserved by the* ***United States National Archives****.*

Original Signal Corps caption transcription:

SC 203201

A dead American soldier, his blood spattered over the ground, lies on the Rhine River bridge at Worms, Germany. The town fell to troops of the U.S. Third Army, 21 March 45.

Signal Corps archival notation:

Signal Corps Photo #ETO-HQ-45-4522157 (Lt. A. J. Salvas).
Orig. neg. rec'd from OCSigO ETOUSA, SOS, European Theater of Operations, USA, March 1945.
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Face deletions cleared by letter from BPR 20 Sept. 45.
4x5 orig. neg.
Lot 10960.

The Identification of PFC Charles Theodore Plog at the Nibelungen Bridge
By Karen Lagrange Cox
Independent Historical Research Archive Copy | March 19, 2026

This article documents the historical identification of the previously unidentified serviceman shown in a widely circulated Associated Press wartime photograph (AP Photo ID 5450301058) taken by photographer James Pringle.

> *AP Photo ID 5450301058: Associated Press wartime photograph (circa March 26, 1945), historically referenced in this research, depicting the fallen serviceman later identified as PFC Charles Theodore Plog of Poughkeepsie, New York, Company A, 10th Armored Infantry Battalion, 4th Armored Division, on the Ernst Ludwig Bridge (now the Nibelungen Bridge) in Worms, Germany. The image also shows PFC Billy Zimmerman of Hagerstown, Maryland, and PFC Norman Booher of Trinidad, Colorado, both of Battery B, 838th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion, taking cover near the western bridge tower, with visible damage to the eastern tower in the background.*

Although that photograph is not reproduced in this historical record preservation copy, it remains central to the historical research and identification described herein.

A U.S. Army Signal Corps photograph, reproduced in this document, provides additional contemporaneous documentation of the same scene.

Although the military knew the serviceman's identity and had notified his family of his death, his name did not appear in the caption of the widely published Associated Press photograph, leaving him unidentified in the image itself.

Through recent research, it has been determined that **Private First-Class Charles Theodore Plog of Poughkeepsie, New York**, is the soldier in the photograph.

Even Plog's hometown newspaper did not recognize that one of its own residents appeared in the photograph. The April 4, 1945, edition of the *Poughkeepsie Journal* (p. 4) identified the other soldiers, but not Plog.

Two Photographs: Different Days

Two photographs were taken of PFC Plog on the Nibelungen Bridge near the western tower. It is believed the two photographs were taken on different days.

First Photograph, March 21, 1945

The first photograph, taken on March 21, 1945, by Lieutenant A. J. Salvas of the United States Army Signal Corps, documents the scene on the west side of the Nibelungen Bridge in Worms, Germany, shortly after the death of PFC Charles Theodore Plog during the U.S. advance into Germany.

The image shows the fallen soldier with the eastern tower of the bridge undamaged, indicating it was made soon after Plog's death. This photograph formed part of the Army's official wartime record but was not widely published at the time.

The Signal Corps, a branch of the U.S. Army responsible for military communications and information systems, created such images to document combat operations and conditions in the field.

The Second Photograph, circa March 26, 1945

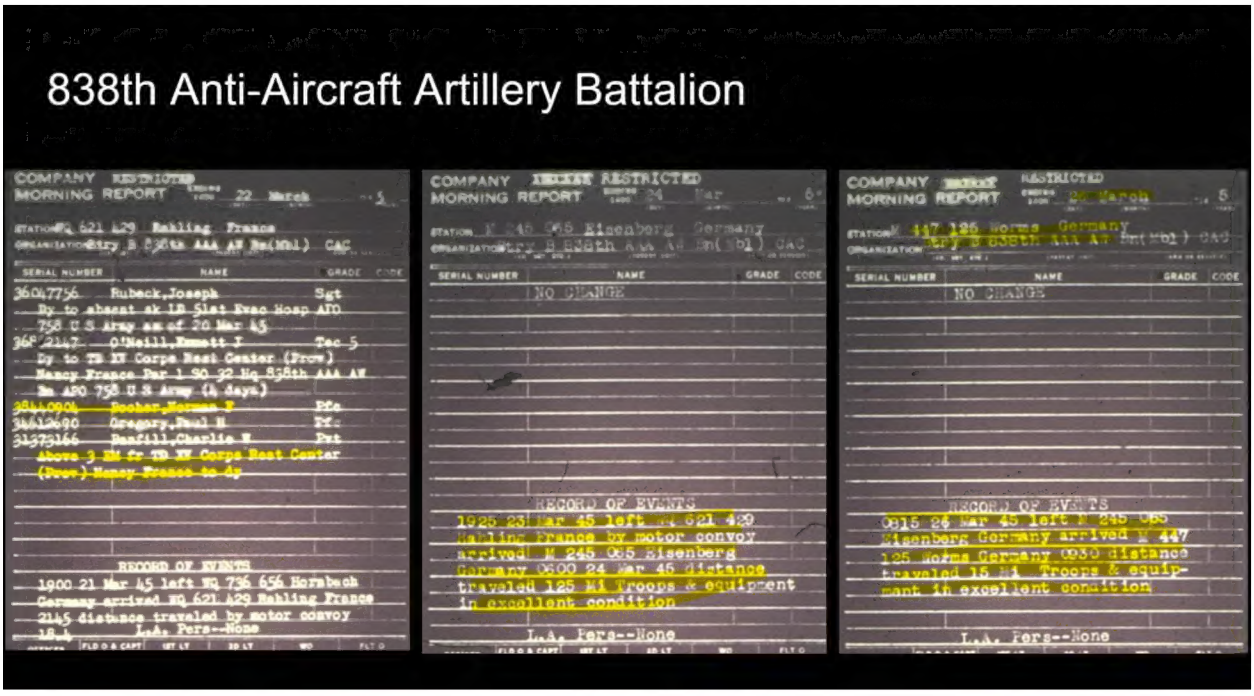
A second photograph, a widely circulated Associated Press wartime image (**AP Photo ID 5450301058**) taken circa March 26, 1945, by Associated Press photographer **James Pringle**, shows the same location as the March 21 photograph, with PFC Plog in the foreground and two soldiers, **PFC Billy Zimmerman of Hagerstown, Maryland**, and **PFC Norman Booher of Trinidad, Colorado**, both from Battery B, 838th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion, taking cover near the west tower by the guardhouse.

Although that Associated Press image is not reproduced in this historical record preservation copy, it remains central to the historical identification discussed herein.

The photo also shows damage to the eastern bridge tower, suggesting it was taken several days after Plog's death.

According to Morning Reports, the 838th AAA Battalion did not arrive in Worms until March 26, 1945, which supports the conclusion that the photograph was taken on or shortly after that date.

Morning Reports, the 838th AAA Battalion did not arrive in Worms until March 26, 1945



Searching for the Soldier's Identity

According to Carlo Riva, city council member in Worms, Germany, the earliest known published interest in the soldier's identity appeared in a 1985 article in the *Wormser Zeitung*. That report prompted him to begin searching for the soldier's identity.

In later years, the City of Worms honored soldiers and the families of those who occupied the city following the defeat of German forces during World War II. For a ceremony planned for March 2020, Riva continued to seek the soldier's identity so that the soldier's family could be contacted and invited to participate. The ceremony did not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, Riva continued his efforts.

To assist with the search, Riva, who worked for the Directorate IMCOM Europe and previously for the 293rd BSB Directorate of Engineering and Housing in the Resource Management Office as a Budget Analyst, enlisted the help of two Americans in January 2020. One was William Borneman of Colorado, a former U.S. Army officer previously stationed in Worms, whose wife is from the city. The other was Karen Lagrange Cox (author of this article) of Broussard, Louisiana, who once lived in Worms as an Army dependent. The three were already connected through a Facebook military group focused on Worms. Other individuals also contributed to the research.

In 2020, Riva emailed Cox and Borneman the names and information of soldiers who were Killed in Action (KIA) in or around Worms during the latter part of March 1945. Each soldier was carefully researched, and all were eventually ruled out as the serviceman in the photograph.

Despite continued efforts after the planned 2020 ceremony, identifying the soldier remained difficult without a name to guide the search. Borneman later said:

"*With all known leads covered, at least by Riva and Cox, this endeavor must be considered 'pending inactive' for now. Who knows, someone somewhere might come up with something. Stranger things have happened.*"

And indeed, something eventually did happen.

Stranger Things Did Happen

In October 2025, an international effort began to uncover the identity of the soldier depicted on the bridge. Historian Joey van Meesen of Footsteps® Researchers and SNAFU DOCS, Schiedam, The Netherlands, came across the 1945 photograph taken by Pringle and emailed the Worms newspaper, *Wormser Zeitung*.

The newspaper forwarded the inquiry to Riva in Germany, who then shared it with Borneman and Cox in the United States. This collaboration spanning Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States brought together local knowledge, archival research, and military records to solve a decades-old mystery.

Shortly after receiving the forwarded email, Cox searched newspapers.com and located two previously published photographs of Plog. When compared with a close-up of the soldier on the

bridge, the resemblance was striking. Cox briefly showed the images to her husband, Larry, who immediately remarked that the two photographs appeared to show the same man.

Building on the international collaboration, van Meesen took the lead in the renewed research effort. In an email, he noted there was a strong possibility that Plog was the soldier in the photograph, although some details still required verification. At that time, his U.S.-based research team could not access military records at the National Archives due to a government shutdown.

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS
CHARLES T. PLOG, son of Mrs
Charles J Plog, 204 South avenue,
who was killed in action in Ger-
many on March 21 while serving
with the Tenth Armored division
of General Patton's Third army

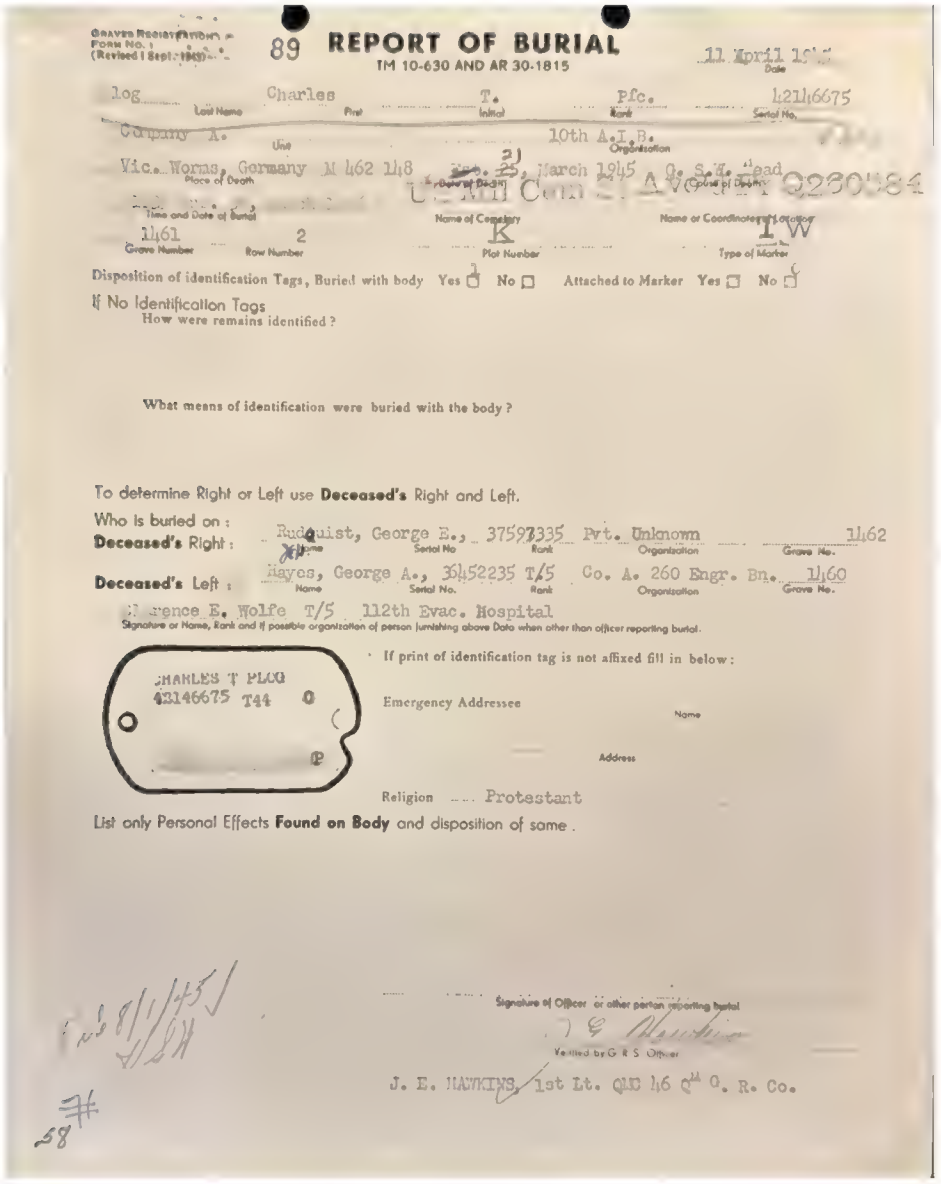
Left to right:
First photo: *PFC Charles Theodore Plog, courtesy of the Plog Family;*
Second photo: *Charles John Plog, Catherine Wunderly Plog, and PFC Plog, courtesy of The Plog Family;*
Third photo: *PFC Plog, Poughkeepsie Journal, December 14, 1942, page 10;*
Fourth photo: *PFC Plog, Poughkeepsie Journal, May 14, 1945, page 14.*

Research Findings

Records obtained from the U.S. National Archives allowed van Meesen and his team to conclusively establish Plog's identity. Based on the research conducted and records obtained by van Meesen, the following information is currently known:

The identity of PFC Charles Theodore Plog was confirmed through a review of U.S. Army records, burial documentation, unit morning reports, and historical photographic evidence, including both the Signal Corps and Associated Press wartime photographs. These records place Plog at the Nibelungen Bridge in Worms, Germany, on March 21, 1945—the date he was reported killed in action. When compared with the location, timing, and details visible in the historical photographs, the evidence supports the conclusion that Plog is the serviceman depicted in the image.

Report of Burial



89 REPORT OF BURIAL
TM 10-630 AND AR 30-1815

11 April 19[illegible]
Date

Plog Charles T. Pfc. 42146675
Last Name First Initial Rank Serial No.

Company A. 10th A.I.B.
Unit Organization

Vic. Worms, Germany M 462 148 Mar. 25, March 1945 G. S. W. Head
Place of Death Date of Death Cause of Death

Time and Date of Burial
1461 2 K IW
Grave Number Row Number Plot Number Type of Marker

Disposition of identification Tags, Buried with body Yes ☐ No ☐ Attached to Marker Yes ☐ No ☐

If No Identification Tags
How were remains identified?

What means of identification were buried with the body?

To determine Right or Left use **Deceased's** Right and Left.

Who is buried on:
Deceased's Right: Rudquist, George E., 37597335 Pvt. Unknown 1462
Name Serial No. Rank Organization Grave No.

Deceased's Left: Hayes, George A., 36452235 T/5 Co. A. 260 Engr. Bn. 1460
Name Serial No. Rank Organization Grave No.

[illegible]rence E. Wolfe T/5 112th Evac. Hospital
Signature or Name, Rank and if possible organization of person furnishing above Data when other than officer reporting burial.

CHARLES T PLOG
42146675 T44 O
P

If print of identification tag is not affixed fill in below:

Emergency Addressee
Name
Address

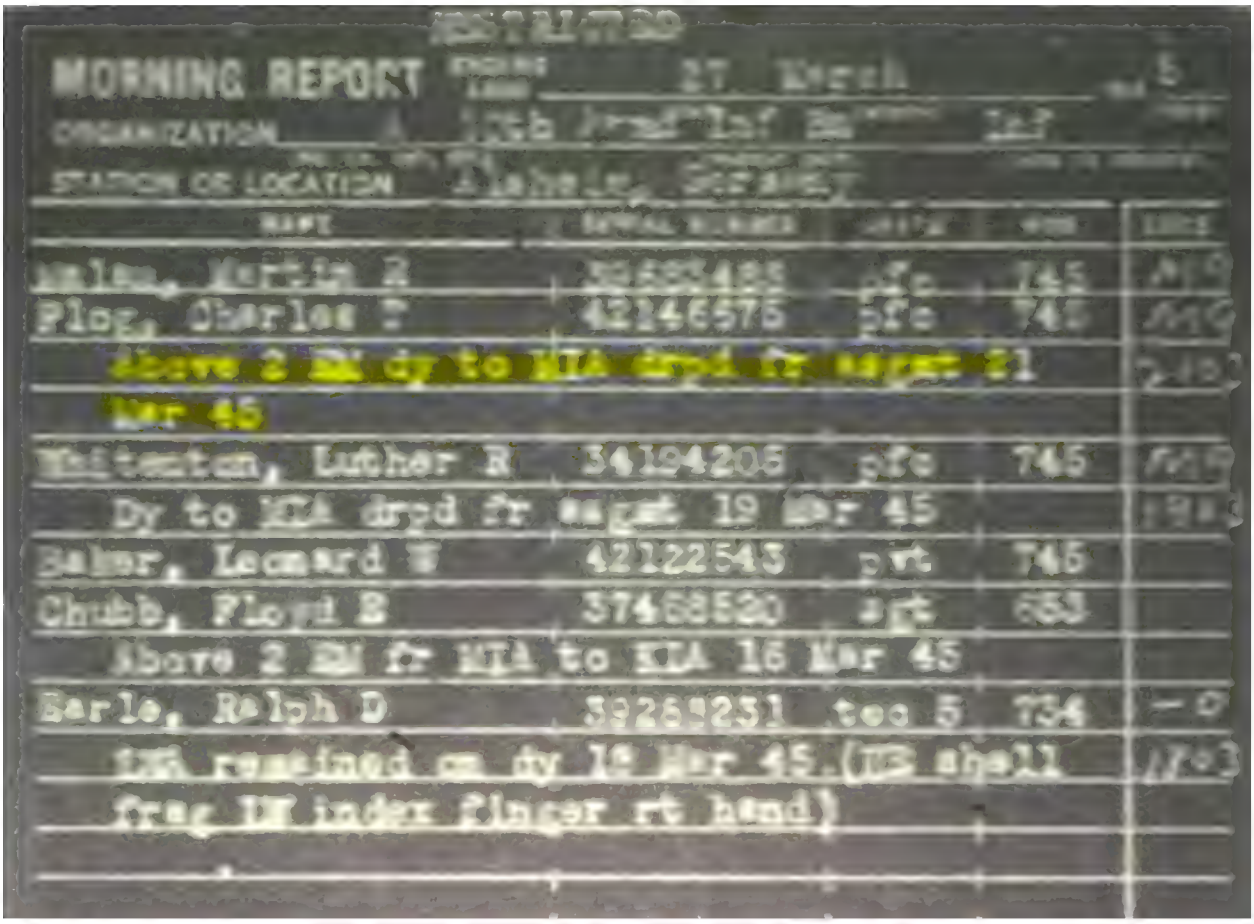
Religion Protestant

List only Personal Effects **Found on Body** and disposition of same.

Signature of Officer or other person reporting burial
Verified by G R S Officer
J. E. HAWKINS, 1st Lt. QMC 46 Q[illegible] Q. R. Co.

Military records initially listed PFC Plog as Missing in Action (MIA) on March 27, 1945; his status was later corrected to KIA on his company's Morning Report of April 30, 1945, following confirmation of his death. The delay likely resulted from his unit's reassignment north of Worms, which prevented immediate knowledge of his loss on March 21, 1945.

Missing in Action on March 27, 1945



MORNING REPORT

Plog, Charles T 42146575 pfc 745

Above 2 MM dy to MIA dtpd fr August 21 Mar 45

Whitenton, Luther R 34194206 pfc 745

Dy to KIA dtpd fr August 19 Mar 45

Baker, Leonard W 42122543 pvt 745

Chubb, Floyd B 37468520 pfc 653

Above 2 MM fr MIA to KIA 16 Mar 45

Earle, Ralph D 39269231 tec 5 734

DW remained on dy 19 Mar 45 (MS shell frag DW index finger rt hand)

Morning Report of April 30, 1945

RESTRICTED

MORNING REPORT 30 April

ORGANIZATION A 10th Armd Inf Bn Inf

STATION OR LOCATION Oranssau, Germany

NAME	SERIAL NUMBER	GRADE	MOS
Bolford, Homer G	35624546	Pfc	745
[illegible] remained on dy 14 April 45. Lac W rt hand 1st finger HE shell frag Dy: 745			
Plog, Charles T	42146675	Pfc	745
Fr MIA 21 Mar 45 to KIA 21 Mar 45 Germany. Dy: 745			
Lamar, Bud L	36463565	Pfc	745
Reengd & jd(prev dropd [illegible] 110 [illegible] Germany) 10 Apr 45. per par 3-c(1) Cir 33 TUSA dtd 27 Mar 45 Dy: 745			

RECORD OF EVENTS

Grid Zone: Nord de Guerre

					PRESENT		ABSENT				

In December 1944, he was a replacement in the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium, before advancing to Worms in March 1945. He served in the 4th Armored Division, 10th Armored Infantry Battalion, Company A, under General George S. Patton's Third Army. They played a leading role in the rapid Allied advance across France and into Germany during the final months of the war.

The photograph taken by Salvas on March 21, 1945 helped van Meesen confirm Plog's identity, showing him as the only soldier killed on the Nibelungen Bridge between March 20 and March 21, 1945.

Plog's Report of Burial indicate he died from a fatal combat wound at the military map coordinates of M 462 148. The burial record shows that he was initially laid to rest on March 30, 1945, at Lorraine American Cemetery outside Saint-Avold, Moselle, France.

In January 1949, he was reinterred at Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery in Poughkeepsie, where his parents are also buried, as seen on his headstone.

Explaining the Photo Timeline

With Plog's identity established, attention turned to another long-standing question: why do two photographs, taken days apart, appear to show his body in the same location on the Nibelungen Bridge?

The gap between the first photograph, taken on March 21, 1945, and the second, circa March 26, 1945, can be attributed to several factors, including the hazards of the battlefield. German snipers were reported to be on the east side of the bridge; there may have been delays in recovery procedures, and the timing of photographic documentation also played a role. These factors help explain how his body remained in the same general location for several days.

Research

Video: The Research Behind the Identification of PFC Charles Theodore Plog

Video Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHhXl-qmEQc

Historical Documentation: This documentary presents the research process used to confirm the identity of PFC Charles Theodore Plog in the March 1945 Nibelungen Bridge photograph.

Documentary produced by: *Joey van Meesen, SNAFU DOCS*
Research organization: *Footsteps® Researchers*
Identification credited to: *Joey van Meesen, Schiedam, The Netherlands*

Visit to Worms

In February 2026, van Meesen traveled to Worms to prepare a video about the research on the soldier depicted in the photographs by Salvas and Pringle.

He met with Riva, historian Dr. Gerold Bönnen, Lord Mayor Adolf Kessel, and staff from the *Wormser Zeitung* to present his findings regarding the photographs taken by Pringle and Salvas.

Van Meesen brought a photograph of PFC Plog and placed it on the bridge alongside roses, near the spot where Plog lost his life.

Photo courtesy of Carlo Riva. Left to right: Carlo Riva, Joey van Meesen, Historian Dr. Gerold Bönnen, Lord Mayor Adolf Kessel, Worms, Germany.

Photo courtesy of Joey van Meesen.

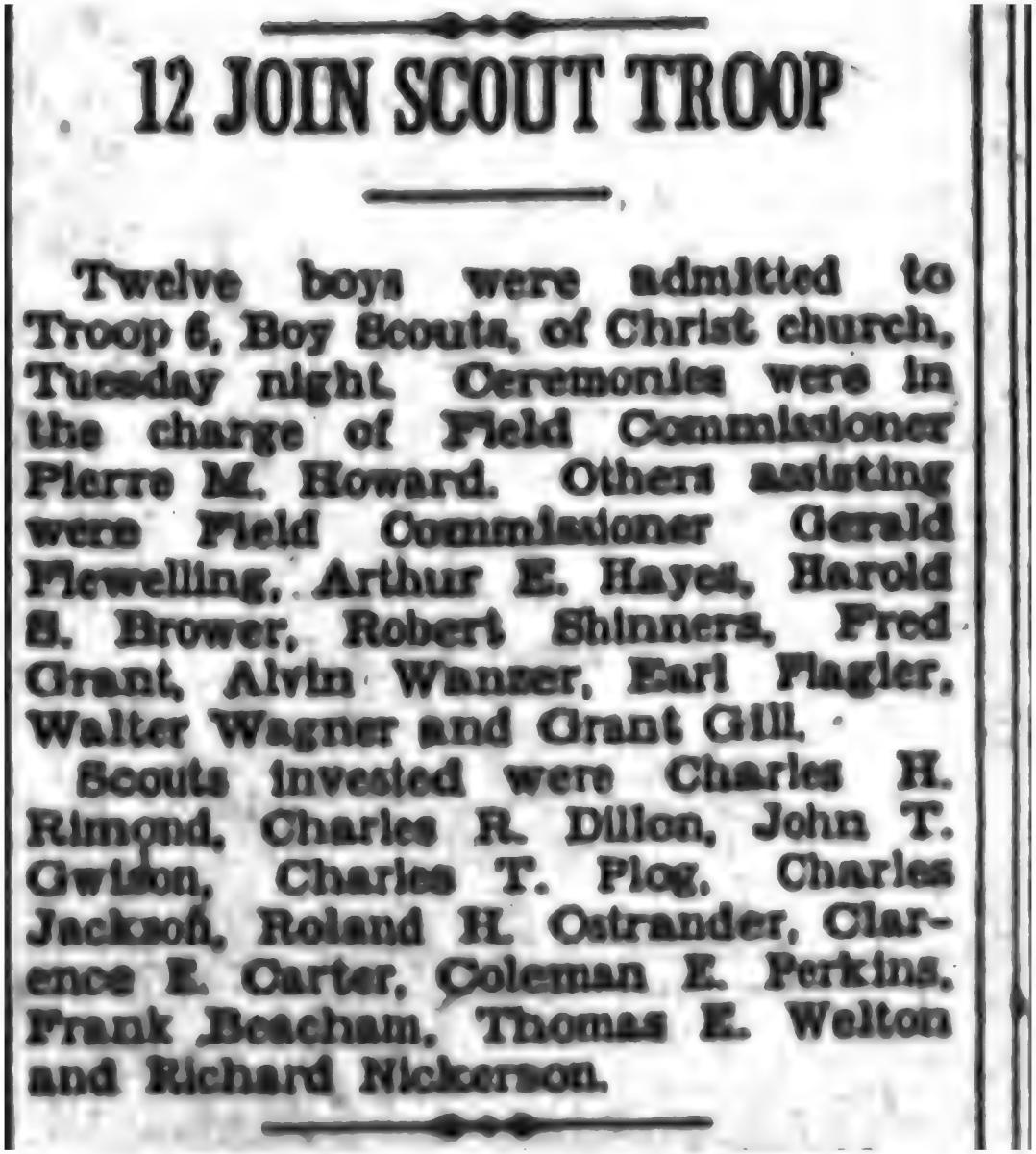
About Plog

Plog was born on May 21, 1919, in Poughkeepsie.

He was baptized at Christ Episcopal Church on September 21, 1919.

He was 25 years old at the time of his death.

The *Poughkeepsie Eagle News*, February 11, 1932, page 3, shows Plog was admitted as a scout to Boy Scouts Troop 6 of Christ Church.

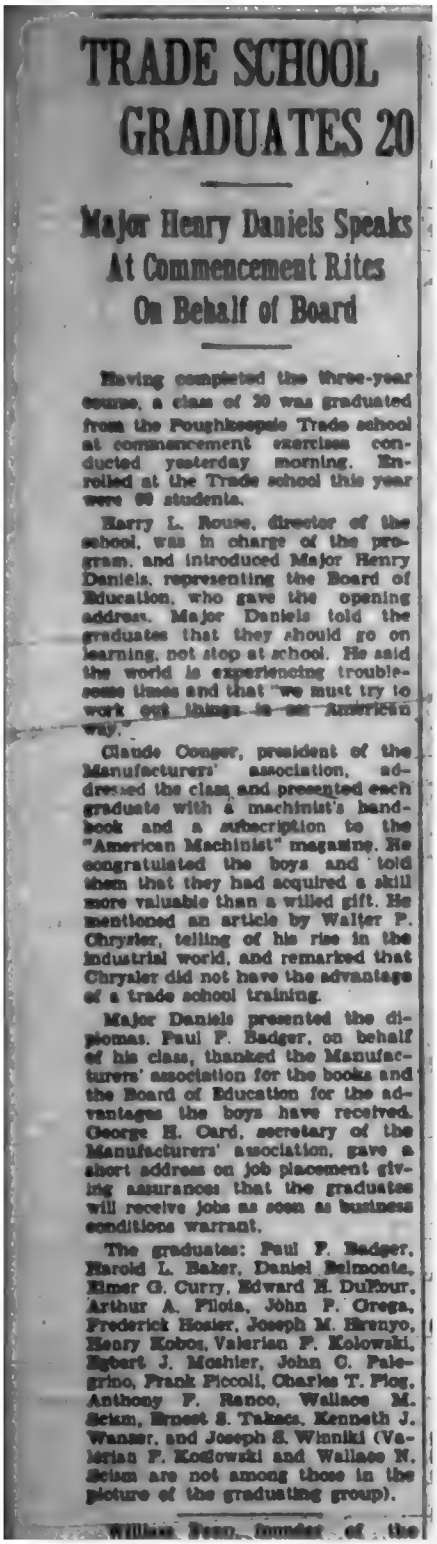


12 JOIN SCOUT TROOP

Twelve boys were admitted to Troop 6, Boy Scouts, of Christ church, Tuesday night. Ceremonies were in the charge of Field Commissioner Pierre M. Howard. Others assisting were Field Commissioner Gerald Flewelling, Arthur E. Hayes, Harold S. Brower, Robert Shinners, Fred Grant, Alvin Wanzer, Earl Flagler, Walter Wagner and Grant Gill.

Scouts invested were Charles H. Rimond, Charles R. Dillon, John T. Gwilon, Charles T. Plog, Charles Jackson, Roland H. Ostrander, Clarence E. Carter, Coleman E. Perkins, Frank Beacham, Thomas E. Welton and Richard Nickerson.

He graduated from Poughkeepsie Trade School according to the Poughkeepsie Eagle News, June 30, 1938, page 4.



TRADE SCHOOL GRADUATES 20

Major Henry Daniels Speaks At Commencement Rites On Behalf of Board

Having completed the three-year course, a class of 20 was graduated from the Poughkeepsie Trade school at commencement exercises conducted yesterday morning. Enrolled at the Trade school this year were 60 students.

Harry L. Rouse, director of the school, was in charge of the program, and introduced Major Henry Daniels, representing the Board of Education, who gave the opening address. Major Daniels told the graduates that they should go on learning, not stop at school. He said the world is experiencing trouble-some times and that "we must try to work out things in our American way."

Claude Conger, president of the Manufacturers' association, addressed the class and presented each graduate with a machinist's handbook and a subscription to the "American Machinist" magazine. He congratulated the boys and told them that they had acquired a skill more valuable than a willed gift. He mentioned an article by Walter P. Chrysler, telling of his rise in the industrial world, and remarked that Chrysler did not have the advantage of a trade school training.

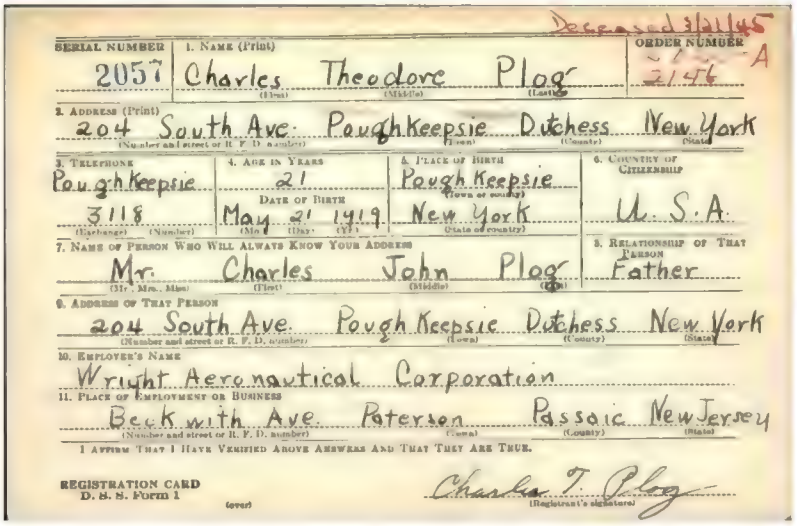
Major Daniels presented the diplomas. Paul F. Badger, on behalf of his class, thanked the Manufacturers' association for the books and the Board of Education for the advantages the boys have received. George H. Card, secretary of the Manufacturers' association, gave a short address on job placement giving assurances that the graduates will receive jobs as soon as business conditions warrant.

The graduates: Paul F. Badger, Harold L. Baker, Daniel Belmonte, Elmer G. Curry, Edward H. DuFour, Arthur A. Filoia, John P. Grega, Frederick Hosier, Joseph M. Hrenyo, Henry Kobos, Valerian F. Kolowski, Egbert J. Moshier, John C. Palegrino, Frank Piccoli, Charles T. Plog, Anthony F. Ranco, Wallace M. Scism, Ernest S. Takacs, Kenneth J. Wanser, and Joseph S. Winniki (Valerian F. Kozlowski and Wallace N. Scism are not among those in the picture of the graduating group).

William Penn, founder of the

PFC Plog registered for the military on October 16, 1940, according to his Military Registration Card. The card shows he was white, 5 feet 10 inches tall, 135 pounds, with blue eyes, brown hair, and a light complexion.

Military Registration



Deceased 3/21/45

SERIAL NUMBER 2057 | 1. NAME (Print) Charles (First) Theodore (Middle) Plog (Last) | ORDER NUMBER 2146 A

2. ADDRESS (Print) 204 South Ave. (Number and street or R. F. D. number) Poughkeepsie (Town) Dutchess (County) New York (State)

3. TELEPHONE Poughkeepsie (Exchange) 3118 (Number) | 4. AGE IN YEARS 21 | DATE OF BIRTH May (Mo.) 21 (Day) 1919 (Yr.) | 5. PLACE OF BIRTH Poughkeepsie (Town or county) New York (State or country) | 6. COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP U. S. A.

7. NAME OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS Mr. (Mr., Mrs., Miss) Charles (First) John (Middle) Plog (Last) | 8. RELATIONSHIP OF THAT PERSON Father

9. ADDRESS OF THAT PERSON 204 South Ave. (Number and street or R. F. D. number) Pough Keepsie (Town) Dutchess (County) New York (State)

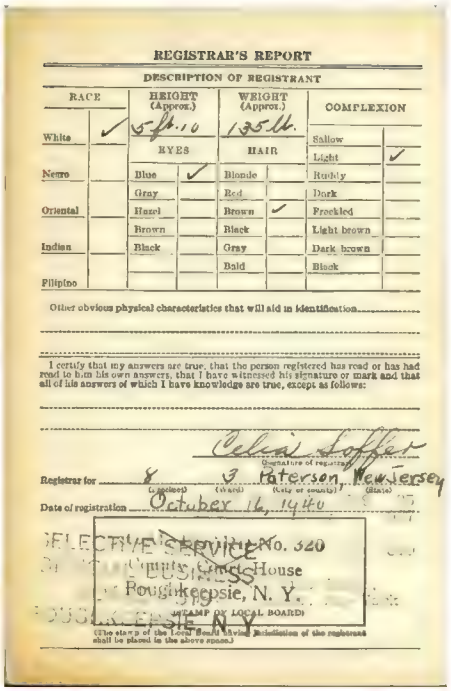
10. EMPLOYER'S NAME Wright Aeronautical Corporation

11. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS Beckwith Ave. (Number and street or R. F. D. number) Paterson (Town) Passaic (County) New Jersey (State)

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.

REGISTRATION CARD D. S. S. Form 1 (over)

Charles T. Plog (Registrant's signature)



REGISTRAR'S REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF REGISTRANT

RACE		HEIGHT (Approx.)		WEIGHT (Approx.)		COMPLEXION	
White	✓	5 ft. 10		135 lb.		Sallow	
Negro		EYES		HAIR		Light	✓
		Blue	✓	Blonde		Ruddy	
Oriental		Gray		Red		Dark	
		Hazel		Brown	✓	Freckled	
Indian		Brown		Black		Light brown	
		Black		Gray		Dark brown	
Filipino				Bald		Black	

Other obvious physical characteristics that will aid in identification

I certify that my answers are true, that the person registered has read or has had read to him his own answers, that I have witnessed his signature or mark and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:

Celia Soffer (Signature of registrar)

Registrar for 8 (Precinct) 3 (Ward) Paterson (City or county) New Jersey (State)

Date of registration October 16, 1940

SELECTIVE SERVICE No. 320 County Court House Poughkeepsie, N. Y. (STAMP OF LOCAL BOARD)

(The stamp of the Local Board having jurisdiction of the registrant shall be placed in the above space.)

Prior to enlisting in the Army on June 28, 1944, at Fort Dix, New Jersey, Plog worked for Wright Aeronautics in Paterson, New Jersey. He trained at Camp Blanding, Florida.

fold3
Charles T Plog
42146675
Ft Dix New Jersey
28 Jun 1944
No branch assignment
Army
White
Dutchess County, New York
Enlistment for the duration of the War or other emergency, plus six months, subject to the discretion of the President or otherwise according to law
Civilian
Basic Men, Enlisted Men
4 years of high school
Machinists
Single, without dependents
5'9"
150 lbs
Brown
Blue
World War II
United States of America
PUBLICATION INFO
U.S., WWI Army Enlistment Records, 1938-1946
The National Archives
Oct 30, 2013
Enlistment information for Army personnel from 1938 to 1946, with the greatest number of records from the years during World War
Connections
Comments about index record

City directories show Plog lived at 204 South Avenue in Poughkeepsie.

He was survived by his parents, Charles John Plog and Catherine Wunderly Plog, one sibling, Catherine Plog (Kelly), and his maternal grandfather George Wunderly.

For his sacrifice, Plog was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart.

Meaning and Legacy

When van Meesen was asked, "**How does giving a name and recognition to a WWII soldier, whose identity from an old photograph remained unknown for decades, serve to honor their sacrifice and restore their place in history?**," his response was:

"*Giving someone his name back makes him more human again. By knowing his name and his story we can familiarize ourselves with that person.*"

"*For me he now becomes a young individual who was engaged, had some sort of future in mind, but was called to serve for his country.*"

"*And by doing that we understand what he had to give up by paying the ultimate price so that we can live in freedom today.*"

"*And this would have not been possible if those pictures were not made. By identifying him, the story of the photo and the story of the individual come together.*"

Though decades passed before his name was known, Private First-Class Charles Theodore Plog now stands forever recognized, not just in a photograph, but in history, memory, and the hearts of those who honor his sacrifice.

From the Research Collaborators

The identity of Plog was ultimately confirmed by historian van Meesen, whose tireless work in uncovering key leads brought the story to light. This identification represents the combined efforts of international researchers, archivists, and historians. The Plog family was informed of the findings and shown the photographs, which they had not previously seen. The reflections below come from those who researched the case and helped restore Plog's place in history.

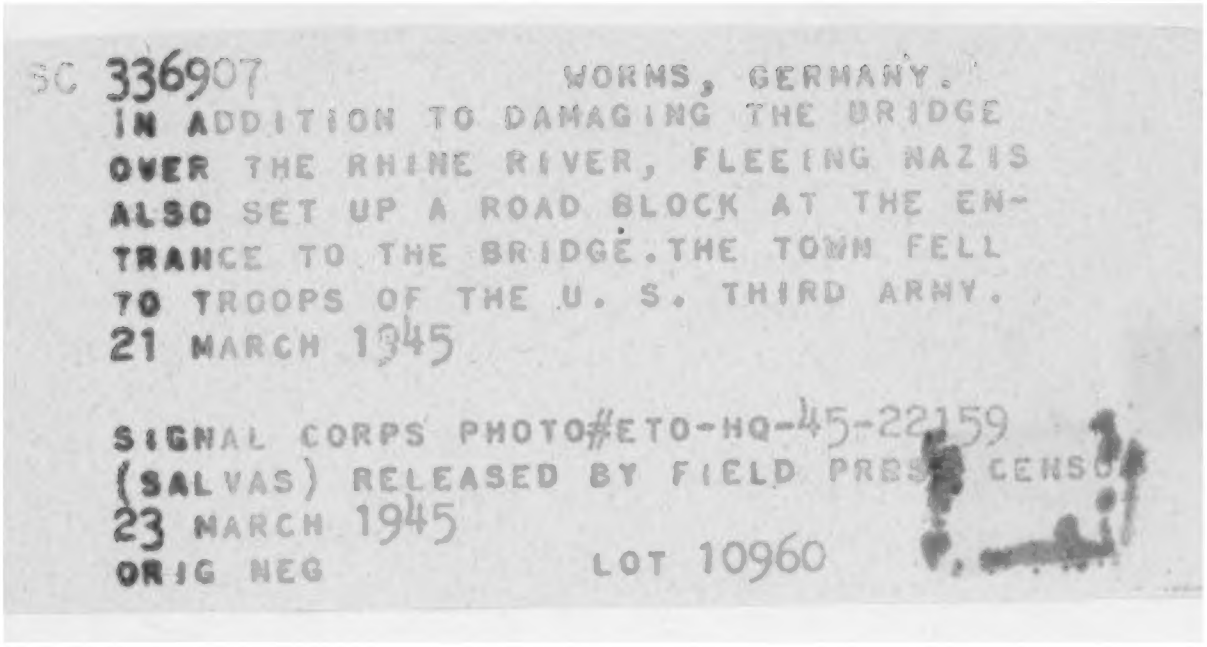
"Over 40 years after the publication of the photo of the three US soldiers on the Worms Rhine bridge, I am moved and anxious to identify and honor them and to thank their families, because they risked their lives to liberate us from the fascist regime."
Carlo Riva, City Council Member City of Worms, Germany, and former longtime employee with the United States Army in Germany

"The identification of Charles Theodore Plog as being the unknown soldier of the Rhine Bridge in Worms comes with great relief and satisfaction for several reasons, to include my links to the city and service in the U.S. Army."
William Borneman, Retired United States Army Captain, Military Police

"At long last, the soldier lying on the Nibelungen Bridge over the Rhine in Worms, Germany, from March 1945, has been identified. I can finally call him by name, PFC Charles Theodore Plog, while honoring his service."
Karen Lagrange Cox, Independent Researcher, Broussard, Louisiana, United States

Nibelungen Bridge Photos

Photo credit: Lt. A. J. Salvas with the Signal Corps. Nibelungen Bridge taken on March 21, 1945; from the United States National Archives. Signal Corps photo 111-SC-336907


SC 336907
WORMS, GERMANY.
IN ADDITION TO DAMAGING THE BRIDGE
OVER THE RHINE RIVER, FLEEING NAZIS
ALSO SET UP A ROAD BLOCK AT THE EN-
TRANCE TO THE BRIDGE. THE TOWN FELL
TO TROOPS OF THE U. S. THIRD ARMY.
21 MARCH 1945
SIGNAL CORPS PHOTO #ETO-HQ-45-22159
(SALVAS) RELEASED BY FIELD PRESS CENSOR
23 MARCH 1945
ORIG NEG
LOT 10960

Archival Metadata for U.S. Army Signal Corps Photo 111-SC-336907

Original Signal Corps caption transcription:

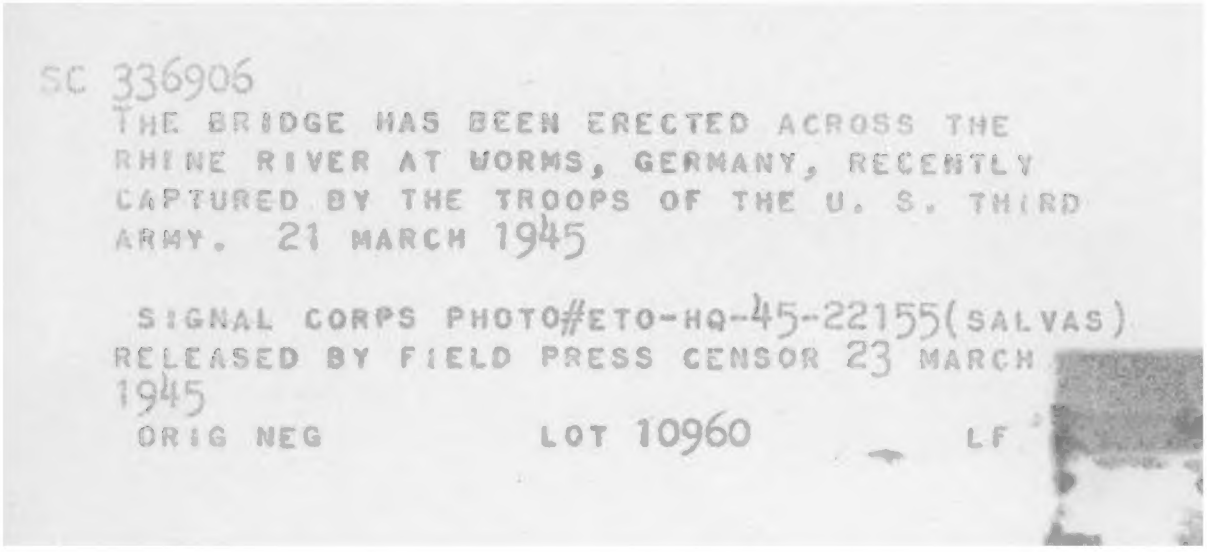
SC 336907
WORMS, GERMANY.

In addition to damaging the bridge over the Rhine River, fleeing Nazis also set up a road block at the entrance to the bridge. The town fell to troops of the U.S. Third Army.
21 March 1945

Signal Corps archival notation:

Signal Corps Photo #ETO-HQ-45-22159
(SALVAS)
Released by Field Press Censor
23 March 1945
Orig. Neg.
Lot 10960

Photo credit: Lt. A. J. Salvas with the Signal Corps. Nibelungen Bridge taken on March 21, 1945; from the United States National Archives. Signal Corps Photo number 111-SC-336906


SC 336906
THE BRIDGE HAS BEEN ERECTED ACROSS THE RHINE RIVER AT WORMS, GERMANY, RECENTLY CAPTURED BY THE TROOPS OF THE U. S. THIRD ARMY. 21 MARCH 1945
SIGNAL CORPS PHOTO#ETO-HQ-45-22155(SALVAS)
RELEASED BY FIELD PRESS CENSOR 23 MARCH 1945
ORIG NEG
LOT 10960
LF

Archival Metadata for U.S. Army Signal Corps Photo 111-SC-336906

Original Signal Corps caption transcription:

SC 336906
The bridge has been erected across the Rhine River at Worms, Germany, recently captured by the troops of the U.S. Third Army.
21 March 1945

Signal Corps archival notation:

Signal Corps Photo #ETO-HQ-45-22155 (SALVAS)
Released by Field Press Censor
23 March 1945
Orig. Neg.
Lot 10960
LF

World War II Statistics

World War II was a global conflict of unimaginable scale. According to **The National WWII Museum**, the United States suffered **416,800 military deaths**, with a total of **418,500 combined military and civilian deaths**. By comparison, Germany experienced **5,533,000 military deaths**, with combined military and civilian deaths ranging from **6.6 to 8.8 million people**. For additional statistics, visit the museum's website.

The identification of PFC Plog ensures that future generations viewing these historic photographs will know not only the moment captured, but the man who stood within it.

In Memory

*This article is dedicated to the memory of **PFC Charles Theodore Plog** and to all soldiers who gave their all.*

Plog's family was informed prior to the publication of this article.
A sincere thank you to the Plog Family for providing pictures of Plog used with this article.

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The identification of **PFC Charles Theodore Plog** in the wartime Associated Press photograph was made by historian **Joey van Meesen**, whose identification work is expressly acknowledged in this historical record preservation copy.

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